



REPORT OF THE KENTUCKY NURSING EDUCATION MOBILITY TASK FORCE

NURSING EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY

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**KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF PRACTICAL NURSING
KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING
KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF BACCALAUREATE
AND HIGHER DEGREE NURSING PROGRAMS**

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INTRODUCTION

The Kentucky Nursing Education Mobility Task Force was formed as a consortium of the Kentucky Council of Practical Nursing, Kentucky Council of Associate Degree Nursing and the Kentucky Association of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Nursing Programs. The task force's mission was to advance nursing education access in the Commonwealth of Kentucky by developing an educational mobility model that would:

- define outcome competencies for levels of nursing education,
- promote educational integrity and program quality,
- build upon previous learning,
- avoid duplication and focus on outcomes.

This document provides an explanation of the various educational levels and roles of nurses in Kentucky. The life experiences of several nurses are included to illustrate the multitude of educational pathways and career opportunities available in nursing. The competency based educational model presented herein is based on defined outcome for graduates from each level of nursing education. As higher nursing education levels are achieved, the outcomes competencies reflect increasing complexity. This model, when used by nursing education programs in Kentucky to evaluate previous learning, will reduce barriers to access and program completion. The model promotes recognition of prior learning and experience, which will minimize duplication of previous course work and promote seamless continuation of nursing education.

Nursing is essential to the delivery of quality health care. Its contributions are significant to the economy of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. There are over 60,000 licensed nurses and 50,000 Unlicensed Assistive Personnel in Kentucky (Cabinet for Health Services Licensing and Regulation, June 1, 1998). Over 90 percent of this population is actively working in the state. Approximately 2,000 newly licensed nurses are added to the workforce each year (Kentucky Board of Nursing Annual Report, 1999).

Nurses are the largest component of the health care workforce. Current changes in health care demand that nurses examine complex issues associated with education and career pathways. In this context, educational mobility between and among the multiple entry nursing education pathways is essential for the preparation of a nursing workforce to meet the health needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth. This outcomes based model for assessing nursing competencies supports educational mobility with new opportunities for enhanced access to additional nursing education. Full implementation of this model will shape a nursing education system capable of efficiently producing the nursing workforce needed for a changing health care system.

There are five distinct nursing education levels addressed in the model. These include:

- **Nurse Aide**
- **Licensed Practical Nursing**
- **Associate Degree Nursing**
- **Bachelor of Science in Nursing**
- **Master of Science in Nursing**

GLIMPSES INTO NURSING



I graduated from a practical nursing program in 1983 and vowed, "I'll never go back to school". It took me 12 years to decide differently. I found I wanted to do more, and I felt locked-in as a nurse in a doctor's office. I was 31 years old and needed to decide on whether or not to have a family. My husband and I decided it would be a good time to both begin our family and for me to further my education.

I was accepted into the baccalaureate (BSN) program at Morehead State University when my son was five months old. Wow, were things more difficult this time around! Fortunately, I had a wonderful support system in my family. Since the evening was an important time for interacting with my son, most of my studying was from 4 am until time to get dressed for classes (by his bedtime I was exhausted too). During my senior year I was faced with another obstacle, the sudden death of my mother. Of course I just wanted to quit school and sink into the depths of grief and self-pity, but I kept telling myself, "This is not what she would have wanted me to do".

I successfully completed the BSN program on schedule in 1995, and received my nursing pin from the two most important people in my life, my husband and four year old son. It takes dedication and a very caring support system, but it can be done. I am now a registered nurse with multiple career options.

*Gretta Caudill, RN, BSN
Morehead, KY*

KENTUCKY NURSING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Nurse Aide

The nurse aide functions under the supervision of a licensed nurse (RN or LPN) and assists in caring for the hygiene, comfort, exercise, safety and elimination needs of patients. Lifting and moving patients, observing and reporting client conditions, collecting specimens and giving emotional comfort are also part of being a nurse aide. The nurse aide may be employed in a variety of health care settings.

Nurse aide education may be provided by secondary and post-secondary educational institutions or other state approved providers. This program combines a minimum of 75 hours in lecture and clinical experiences to prepare the individual to take both written and performance examinations. Upon successful completion of both, the nurse aide may be placed on the state nurse aide registry if he or she plans to work in any long-term facility that receives federal funds.

Licensed Practical Nursing

Licensed practical nurses provide nursing care and health promotion activities under the direction of the registered nurse, physician, and/or dentist. The practical nurse, as an integral member of the health care team provides care for individuals of all ages in a variety of health care settings. The practical nurse is expected to think critically and to assist in solving problems in patient care situations.

A practical nurse completes a program that may be from nine to 15 months in a technical college or private institution. Studies include nursing, body structure and function, basic psychology, pharmacology, math, and communication skills. Graduates of an approved program take a licensing examination (NCLEX) for practical nursing. Upon passing the NCLEX-PN examination and meeting other state requirements, the graduate is eligible to apply for licensure by the Kentucky Board of Nursing and use of the title licensed practical nurse (LPN).

GLIMPSES INTO NURSING

Growing up, I wanted to be either a schoolteacher or nurse. I was an avid learner, but always wanted to share (talked a lot in classes). My school experiences were such that I decided I did not want to encounter more teacher nightmares like me in a classroom. I kept hearing Mama say “you reap what you sow.” My default choice of nursing was reinforced by the medical shows on TV— *China Beach*, *Marcus Welby*, and *St. Elsewhere*. In my senior year of high school, I worked each afternoon in a nursing home, and loved it. After high school graduation, I entered the Associate Degree Nursing Program, Kentucky State University. I was the first member of my family to go to college and worked hard to succeed. The program was demanding and the pressure to pass the licensing examination after graduation stressful.

Success was mine—graduation and licensure! I worked full-time in a hospital not quite like *St. Elsewhere*. After 5 years I returned to college to complete a baccalaureate degree in nursing. This time the educational experience was much more enjoyable. The pressures from the initial program were but a memory that maturity and experience had dimmed. The BSN program added a new dimension to my professional career. I now know I have a “License to Learn,” and am making plans to enter graduate school. My nursing education serves me well in my current position as the Assistant Director for the Division of Licensing and Regulation, Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services.

*Moses Abraham, BSN, RN
Frankfort, KY*

Associate Degree Nursing

Graduates of an associate degree nursing program function in various health care settings as providers and managers of care, and as members within the discipline of nursing. Program graduates are prepared to provide nursing care for individuals of all ages. They perform patient care functions that require special knowledge in nursing and the psychological, biological, physical and social sciences. The application of nursing knowledge is emphasized using critical thinking and clinical decision making.

Universities, colleges, and community colleges offer associate degree nursing programs. The program requires approximately two years of full-time study and 60-72 college credit hours. The curriculum and clinical learning opportunities reflect current trends in health care. Graduates of an approved program take a licensing examination for registered nurses. Upon passing the NCLEX-RN examination and meeting other state requirements, graduates are eligible to apply for licensure by the Kentucky Board of Nursing and use of the title of registered nurse (RN).

Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing

Graduates of baccalaureate nursing programs provide health promotion and health restoration care for individuals, families, and populations in a variety of institutional and community settings. The program of study includes courses in the natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and nursing. Baccalaureate education emphasizes critical decision making skills, independent nursing judgment, and management and research skills.

Baccalaureates nursing educational programs are offered by colleges and universities and are approximately four years in length (120-135 college credit hours). The usual degree awarded is the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). Graduates of approved BSN programs take a licensing examination for registered nurses. Upon passing the NCLEX-RN examination and meeting other state requirements, graduates are eligible to apply for licensure by the Kentucky Board of Nursing and use of the title of registered nurse (RN).

GLIMPSES INTO NURSING



While a senior in high school, I decided that I wanted to be a nurse. I liked the curriculum that was outlined in various college catalogs, as long as they did not require basic public speaking! After a year in the baccalaureate program at Southeastern Louisiana University, I decided that I would move back to Kentucky and complete one more year at the community college. Little did I know, it wasn't that easy. I learned that a student had to apply for admission and be accepted in advance. I then applied for admission to the LPN program at Paducah Area Vocational School. I could finish this program in a year, and then get married (my ultimate goal, but I didn't want to get married until I had some sort of "training", as my mother called it. I was a first-generation college student). I graduated from the LPN program and began my nursing practice.

After marriage, I decided that I would like to become a RN and possibly teach school (like my husband). This time I followed the required admission regulations and was accepted for the associate degree program at Paducah Community College. Since I already had the academic basics for a baccalaureate program, I was anxious to see how long it would take to complete the BSN degree as well. During the summer between my first and second years at PCC, I successfully challenged courses at Murray State University. I also took classes that summer, such as Microbiology and Philosophy. I continued taking MSU night classes during my second year in the PCC program. Before graduating from PCC, I successfully challenged two additional courses at MSU. I wanted to pass them and be able to register for the senior level MSU summer courses. That summer, I took and passed the RN licensure examination, worked, and completed BSN nursing classes at MSU. I continued at MSU in the fall and spring, graduating with a BSN one year after I completed the ADN degree. I was then accepted into the MSN program at the University of Evansville. I completed that program in two years. After graduation, I was hired as a nurse faculty member at PCC. I had finally achieved my goal to be a teacher!

I look back on this time in my life and wonder how I worked (part-time, but continually), paid for all of those courses, commuted to school (Murray and Evansville), and made pretty decent grades (all A's). I took a convoluted route to be in nursing, one that worked best with the circumstances of my life. I enjoy nursing and am proud to be a part of the profession. It has been good to me.

Connie Heflin, MSN, RN
Paducah, KY

Masters Degree in Nursing

Graduates of masters degree nursing programs are prepared to function in advanced practice roles in a specialty area of nursing. Areas of study may include nursing administration, nursing education, adult health, community health, maternal-child health, mental health, gerontology, rehabilitation care, or advanced practice as a nurse anesthetist, nurse practitioner, or nurse midwife. Advanced practice nurses may provide primary health care services to all age groups.

This nursing education is offered by colleges and universities and requires approximately 36-46 credit hours of advanced study. Most programs require the completion of a baccalaureate degree prior to graduate program admission. Program completion requirements may include passing a comprehensive written or oral examination, or preparing a research thesis. The graduate of the Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) or the Master of Science with a major in nursing degree (MS) may be eligible to take a national certification examination. Successful completion of a recognized certification examination qualifies the individual to apply for designation as an advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) by the Kentucky Board of Nursing.

KENTUCKY NURSING EDUCATION MOBILITY MODEL

Purpose

The purpose of the model is to link all levels of nursing education in an outcome oriented system that creates multiple nursing education pathways that avoid duplication and redundancy by recognizing previous academic and experiential learning.

Assumptions

The model is based upon the following assumptions.

1. Inherent value and worth are present in each nursing education pathway and each is respected for its uniqueness.
2. The elimination of significant barriers to educational mobility is a priority.
3. A fundamental set of principles and a common core of nursing knowledge is shared by nurses across practice settings.
4. Each educational institution is unique and provides an individualized approach to the preparation of nurses who share common outcome competencies.
5. Recognition of previous learning and avoidance of duplication should be the focus of an outcomes oriented nursing educational system.
6. The development of outcome competencies for each type of nursing education program will support educational mobility.
7. Faculty and students are active partners in the learning process.
8. Multiple nursing education pathways should be available and accessible to all qualified individuals.

Nursing Roles

Nursing as a discipline is both an art and an applied science. Nursing roles have developed in response to societal needs. Nurses are involved with disease prevention, health promotion, and health protection and curative and restorative care. The scope of nursing practice today includes many roles and requires various levels of educational preparation. Three major nursing roles are used as the organizing framework in the model:

- **Provider of Care**
- **Manager of Care**
- **Member of the Profession**

Integrated Concepts

Integrated concepts are inherent in each of the three roles. These concepts are developed with increasing complexity at each educational level. These integrated concepts focus on the nurse as a:

- **Designer of Care**
- **Communicator**
- **Coordinator/Collaborator**
- **Advocate**
- **Teacher/Counselor**
- **Scholar**

COMPETENCY MODEL

The educational mobility model developed reflects program completion competencies for each nursing education level. Nursing roles and the integrated concepts are explicated for each level and progressively built upon with each successive level of nursing education. (Refer to the competency matrix pages 13-15)

VALIDATION OF OUTCOME COMPETENCY

As individuals progress through the educational system, a professional portfolio will be used to document prior learning and experiences. A portfolio is a comprehensive document completed by an individual that details the current state of his/her education, practice, background, skills, expertise, and often includes a working plan for professional growth. Participating nursing education programs will use the portfolio to assess competency and determine prior knowledge and experience for advanced placement and credit transfer opportunities.

Competency Model

PROVIDER OF CARE – The nurse uses a systematic process and appropriate resources to assist clients in meeting health needs in an evolving health system. The nurse, as a member of a multi-disciplinary team, makes independent and dependent decisions that shape the design and coordination of client care in a variety of settings.

INTEGRATED CONCEPTS	NURSE AIDE	L.P.N.	A.D.N.	B.S.N.	M.S.N.
DESIGNER OF CARE Develops and implements plans of care that promotes and maintains optimum health status.	Follows directions according to the established plan of care.	Assist in the development of the plan of care and provides care for clients with common well-defined problems.	Develops, implements, and evaluates plans of care to promote and maintain optimum health status.	Modifies plans of care using theory, evidenced-based practice and interdisciplinary resources.	Designs health care protocols/ programs for specific populations.
COMMUNICATOR Participates in a complex ongoing interactive process, which forms professional relationships.	Uses selected medical terminology, reports and records data, and demonstrates caring behaviors.	Uses therapeutic communication techniques.	Uses therapeutic communication effectively with clients, families, and health team members.	Uses therapeutic communication effectively with client populations, community and professional groups.	Implements complex communication strategies with individuals, groups and communities.
COORDINATOR/ COLLABORATOR Facilitates resource management and interacts with others to achieve desired outcomes.	Completes assignments in an organized manner while contributing to team functioning.	Organizes and manages care for assigned clients while working with families and health team members.	Works with the health team to establish priorities and manage care to achieve desired outcomes.	Ensures continuity of care by facilitating interdisciplinary services to achieve desired outcomes.	Evaluates the adequacy of interdisciplinary care systems and appropriately intervenes to achieve desired outcomes.
ADVOCATE Assures that the client welfare prevails.	Identifies and reports situations that may impact client/family well being.	Recognizes client rights and reports concerns appropriately.	Identifies, reports, and intervenes on the behalf of clients and families in the protection of their rights.	Uses problem solving strategies in support of client rights and facilitates policy changes.	Analyzes data and engages in health policy development and evaluation at the institutional and community level.
TEACHER/ COUNSELOR Promotes knowledge acquisition and behavioral changes that support optimum health status.	Reports client knowledge deficits, supports needs, and provides basic instruction as directed.	Implements health teaching for clients with identified health needs using standard teaching plans.	Develops, implements, and evaluates teaching plans for clients and families concerning promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health.	Uses interdisciplinary resources to develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive teaching plans to meet the learning needs of groups and communities.	Investigates the outcomes of teaching/counseling interactions and incorporates findings to promote evidence based practice.
SCHOLAR Demonstrates a professional commitment to life-long learning and scientifically based practice.	Recognizes situations beyond ones knowledge and experience and reports appropriately.	Implement evidence based programs/protocols for client care.	Supports evidenced based practice through participation in the development of programs/protocols.	Utilizes research findings to support evidence based practice.	Advances evidence based practice.

MANAGER OF CARE – The nurse assures that the right care is given at the right time, in the right setting, at the right cost to achieve desired outcomes.

INTEGRATED CONCEPTS	NURSE AIDE	L.P.N.	A.D.N.	B.S.N.	M.S.N.
DESIGNER OF CARE Develops and implements plans of care that promotes and maintains optimum health status.	Organizes care for assigned clients.	Prioritizes care for own clients and delegates to U.A.P.s.	Manages client care delivery and delegates/assigns care to peers, L.P.N.s and U.A.P.s.	Manages client care delivery for groups and communities.	Analyzes system level strategies for balancing cost containment and positive client outcomes.
COMMUNICATOR Participates in a complex ongoing interactive process, which forms professional relationships.	Effectively interacts with others in the work environment.	Promotes cooperative relationships in the work environment.	Uses appropriate communication strategies to effect positive client care outcomes.	Interacts with multi-disciplinary teams to manage the continuum of care for individuals or groups.	Implements complex communication strategies to create, modify, evaluate, and enhance health care policy and systems.
COORDINATOR/ COLLABORATOR Facilitates resource management and interacts with others to achieve desired outcomes.	Demonstrates efficient use of time, equipment, and supplies in managing own assignment.	Participates with the health care team to plan and evaluate clients' plans of care.	Participates in the development and revision of institutional standards of care.	Participates in the multi-disciplinary management of client/institutional evaluative process.	Directs the multi-disciplinary assessment of client management standards in relation to desired outcomes.
ADVOCATE Assures that the client welfare prevails.	Supports the right of the clients to participate in their own health care decisions.	Identifies and reports discrepancies in policies and practices and practice related to individual and family well being.	Uses appropriate processes to support client wishes regarding care decisions.	Develops strategies to obtain needed health care resources to support client care decisions.	Demonstrates leadership to effect change in health care.
TEACHER/ COUNSELOR Promotes knowledge acquisition and behavioral changes that support optimum health status.	Reinforces institutional policies related to safety and health.	Identifies and responds to client situations that require instruction.	Evaluates and modifies teaching plans based on individual learning outcomes using established criteria.	Uses interdisciplinary resources and evaluates learning outcomes in relation to health status.	Consults and collaborates with multi-disciplinary teams to manage education programs for specific populations.
SCHOLAR Demonstrates a professional commitment to life-long learning and scientifically based practice.	Improves skills to enhance practice.	Demonstrates knowledge of current practice trends and delivery of care.	Uses identified trends and assists in modifying the delivery of care.	Analyzes the impact of practice trends and applies the findings to the development of health care.	Formulates solutions to problems resulting from practice and contribute to health care redesign.

MEMBER OF THE PROFESSION – The nurse is accountable for a practice reflecting the legal and professional standards governing nursing. The nurse as a member of the profession is responsible for life-long learning that supports ethical practice reflecting an appropriate set of values.

INTEGRATED CONCEPTS	NURSE AIDE	L.P.N.	A.D.N.	B.S.N.	M.S.N.
DESIGNER OF CARE Develops and implements plans of care that promotes and maintains optimum health status.	Demonstrates accountable and responsible behavior as a member of the nursing team.	Makes decisions and takes actions that are consistent with the standard of practical nursing practice, established policies, procedures, and licensing laws.	Makes decisions and takes actions that are consistent with the standard of registered nursing practice, established policies, procedures, and licensing laws.	Demonstrates a leadership role in the implementation of professional standards in nursing practice.	Evaluates and modifies standards of nursing practice.
COMMUNICATOR Participates in a complex ongoing interactive process, which forms professional relationships.	Demonstrates ethical/legal behavior and promotes a positive personal image.	Exhibits behaviors consistent with legal and ethical standards of practice.	Promotes nursing as a profession.	Enhances public awareness of nursing contribution to health care.	Interprets advanced nursing practice to the public, other health care providers, and policy makers.
COORDINATOR/ COLLABORATOR Facilitates resource management and interacts with others to achieve desired outcomes.	Performs within defined role and accepts supervision.	Interacts with health care colleagues to promote legal and ethical practice.	Develops collegial relationships for the purpose of professional development.	Assumes leadership role in professional activities.	Partners with consumers and other groups to promote health care improvements.
ADVOCATE Assures that the client welfare prevails.	Recognizes the rights of all individuals and respects differences.	Recognizes that professional and political involvement can influence health care.	Uses political processes to improve client care and outcomes.	Demonstrates leadership skills to effect change in the practice setting.	Assumes responsibility for influencing the political environment of nursing practice.
TEACHER/ COUNSELOR Promotes knowledge acquisition and behavioral changes that support optimum health status.	Assumes responsibility for personal health behaviors.	Demonstrates behavior that promotes health.	Identifies health risks and implements risk reduction strategies for self and others.	Promotes optimum health status for self and others.	Establishes a professional environment in which all members of the team reach their highest level of functioning.
SCHOLAR Demonstrates a professional commitment to life-long learning and scientifically based practice.	Demonstrates interest in self-improvement and seeks education appropriately.	Conducts self-assessment to identify learning needs and established a plan for professional growth.	Implements a plan of continued professional growth.	Fosters professional and personal growth in self and health care team members.	Plans and implements evidenced based professional development programs.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

There are a variety of scholarship and financial aid options available to students seeking a nursing education. All colleges and universities participate in a full range of federal and state financial aid programs. These programs offer grant, loan, and/or employment opportunities to qualified students to assist in meeting both direct and indirect college costs. For additional information, contact the financial aid office at the school of your choice or search specific school, college, and university web sites.

Students have many opportunities to apply for scholarships from educational institutions and/or community agencies. The Kentucky Board of Nursing offers the state supported Nursing Incentive Scholarship Fund. More information on this scholarship can be found on the Kentucky Board of Nursing's web site: www.KBN.state.ky.us

Many health-care institutions offer employee educational assistance programs. Employees who meet certain requirements are offered tuition payment and/or other college costs as a means to support and encourage educational advancement. For additional information, contact your employer.

GLIMPSES INTO NURSING



Like many high school graduates, a life long career choice seemed to be a very difficult decision. After completing a few general education courses at a community college and working at several trade jobs, my desire to work with people coupled with a strong interest in medicine led me to decide nursing was the career for me. Nursing would offer a relatively high degree of job availability and security. At the same time, this field of study would allow for educational growth, upward mobility, and career diversification.

In 1993, I enrolled in the associate degree nursing program at Morehead State University. After graduation in 1995 and subsequent licensure as a RN, I was employed as a medical-surgical nurse at King's Daughters Medical Center (KDMC) in Ashland. While working at KDMC, I improved my competency and gained valuable experience, but soon recognized the need for more education. I decided to begin to pursue my bachelor's degree while continuing to work part time.

While working on my BSN degree, I became interested in the role of the Advanced Practice Nurse (APN). The autonomy of primary care as an APN, and the increased knowledge and opportunity for specialization were very appealing. I observed several family nurse practitioners and was able to obtain a better appreciation for their work, and decided I wanted it to be my work also. In the fall of 1998, I was accepted into the cooperative RN-MSN program offered by Morehead State University and the University of Kentucky.

To assist with the cost of my education, the Kentucky Board of Nursing awarded me Nursing Incentive Scholarships for academic years 1998-99 and 1999-00. I completed the BSN requirements in the spring of 1999, and will complete the Family Nurse practitioner program in the spring of 2001. I am confident that my nursing education will prepare me for the ever-changing and rigorous work ahead of me. As a family nurse practitioner, I plan to practice as a primary care provider in the under served regions of Kentucky.

*Don Hart, RN, BSN
Morehead, KY*

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